

INTERIM

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The editors in INTERIM wish to thank George Savage, Joseph Harrison, Morris Alhadeff, Joseph Seymour, James Franklin Lewis, Preble Thale, Helen Call, Byron Fish, Juanita Lewis, *The New Republic*, the Tryout Theatre, the editors of the various writing magazines of the country, and many others for their encouragement and interest.

Editor's Note

Once again, with the countenance of a determined ghost, a literary magazine makes its appearance in the Northwest. Its coming entails six months of stubbornness and fear on the part of the editors—fear of failing to find good material, stubbornness in refusing to print before we did find it.

This first issue of INTERIM represents several phases of endeavor in the field of writing. We have purposely refused to embrace any specific coterie of artists, because we believe policy in literature makes for isolation and possibly smugness in art. We wish INTERIM to express aesthetic expansion—not aesthetic privilege.

In each issue we have planned to present one, and possibly more than one figure, outside the Northwest. In our first offering we have Henry Miller, who is now writing in California. We fail to see that Henry Miller belongs to any part of the country, but for geographical consonance we must welcome him as this quarter's visitor to our ranks, noting in passing, that many of the writers in this region have felt his power and his encouragement in a world sluiced through with the hackneyed and the forced.

We have been asked time and time again for the standards of our magazine. And we have repeatedly said that we wish the standards to come to us rather than our going to the standards. And the standards have come. If there is a literary unanimity printed in INTERIM it is the quality of positiveness. Writers, in and out of the armed forces, are fighting against negation of values. They are seeing, as Wendell Anderson has seen the "heart's beat pounding its blood into the skies." In these tremulous times, indeed in any time, can one ask for anything more?

WIL STEVENS

WENDELL METZGER—Columbia River Incident

This Vandivoort was some guy. His thick, Dutch neck was set on shoulders that weren't a hand across. He had one of those lantern jaws like Dick Tracy, and he didn't smoke.

The first time I seen him was in a logger's slave-market down on the Columbia River in Clatskanie. I was sitting on a bench figuring just what kind of a smoke the two cigarette-butts I saw about three feet away would make, when a boot comes down on one of the butts and grinds it into the splinters right before my very eyes.

I jumps up.

"Why don't you watch where you're stepping?" I looked at him. "Ya Dutchman," I added.

"What'd I step on?" he asked, looking at me cool-like.

"My smoke," I said.

"I don't smoke," he said.

That sounded simple to me. He sat down, drawing a full pack of tailor-mades out of his mackinaw.

"I carry these around for guys that do smoke, in case they ain't got any."

"Yeah," I said, taking two of the white cylinders.

"I got a plug of tobacco too, for the squaws."

"They go for that," I said.

"Yeah, they like the cigarettes too; they chew them," he said.

He changed his tone and his eyes got hard.

"Is there any hiring out of here?"

"Nope," I said, "and there never will be."

"But it's spring," he said, "I come from upper Wisconsin to Oregon just to work in the long logs."

"You wasted your time," I said.

Mike came over but seeing I was talking to someone, shortened his talk.

"They might need chokermen at Crown-Zellerbach on the Washington side," he said and went out the door.

I looked at the Dutchman, who was watching the doors swing. He had even features, and a lantern jaw and bulging eyes. Powerful hands. I guessed he might stand the gaff.

"Let's go over and see uncle across the river," I said, "He might put us to work. What's your monniker?" I asked.

"Cash," he said.

That struck me as odd.

We crossed the Columbia on the ferry and grabbed a train out of Cathlamet about four in the afternoon heading for camp. We both had our caulks on and intended to keep them on. We got into camp just when the triangle was bonging. Instead of heading for the office we made for the cook-house hoping not to be noticed as outsiders in the general scuffle. We sat down together, turned our plates over and started reaching. I put some pork-chops, a T-bone steak, some French-fries, beans, peas, and some wieners and sauerkraut on my plate and just missed the spareribs, which I hadn't noticed until they were all gone.

Cash was slow but he got his.

A couple of stiffes across the table were looking at us, but I kept shoveling her in. Speed was important. In 1934 men were shot for stealing worse meals than this. I took three helpings, unloosened my belt, and got hold of some angel-food cake and some apple-pie, which sure was good.

I noticed a flunky talking to the cook down where the big kettles were. The cook was looking at us.

"Come on Cash," I said, "let's go."

Cash jumped up, reaching for some gingerbread and some raisin cookies.

The flunky came towards us.

"Where's your meal ticket?" he said.

"We ain't got none."

"Hey boss," the flunky hollered.

The cook ran down the aisle toward us. A short-set guy like a bull jumped up and bellowed his way towards us. I figured he was the boss.

"Who are you guys?" he hollered.

"We're workingmen," I said lamely.

He hollered, "What are you doing eating our good food, you bums."

All the clatter of knives and forks that had sounded like a threshing machine stopped instantly. I could feel eyes upon me.

I summoned my strength. I raised my hand in the air. "Whatever we have done, the I.W.W. will protect us."

"The I.W.W.," the push exploded.

The cook-house rocked with howling lumberjacks stomping their feet on the floor and beating their fists on the tables.

"Get out of here," he said quietly, moving toward us one step.

We got.

We walked twelve miles into town in four hours. The town was dark, silent, and lonely. There wasn't even a cop to stay clear of.

"Where'll we go now?" Cash said, after we'd stood in a doorway for a little while.

"Seattle," I said. "Maybe Archie MacDougall will take pity on our plight and give us a job shining shoes in city-hall."

"Who's Archie MacDougall?"

"He hires loggers," I said.

"But ye got to get to the main line at Longview first, before we can roll. Can you walk twenty-five miles?"

"Twenty-five miles," he echoed, "I just did twice that."

"You Wisconsin guys is soft," I said.

"You Washington guys is crazy," he said.

"Give me a cigarette," I said.

We moved on out of Cathlamet, and about two miles out, just when I was ready to roll some milk cans off their perch and turn in on some good clean boards for some shut-eye, a couple of headlights swung up the rise we just had covered and bore down on us. I stood way out and flagged like I was desperate. I was. I was getting hungry again.

The sedan stopped, and the door was swung open.

"Going as far as Longview, then south," came the pleasant voice.

We climbed in. The driver was middle-aged and alone. He started talking right away. It sure looked good to see the highway go underneath us.

"Going far?" he asked.

"Seattle," Cash said.

"Work in the woods?"

"Yeah, if we get a chance. I don't know what a skidder looks like, I been out of a job so long."

He laughed. "I used to work in the woods when the only power was oxen. No steam. Just men and oxen. Boy, they was men too."

"What do you do now?" I asked.

"I'm the Governor of Oregon," he said.

The rain was coming down hard when we ran into Longview. Longview is like Ketchikan. If it's not raining, just go in some place and hoist a cup of coffee—it will be raining when you come out.

We thanked the Governor and said we'd vote for him. He thanked us.

After the car pulled off Cash asked me if that was really the Governor of Oregon.

"You heard him, didn't you?" I said, "Besides he ain't important—we tell him what to do."

Cash scratched his head.

Like I said, the Dutchman seemed sort of stupid.

We got over to the yards, and the luck was with us. A Great Northern Manifest, in from Portland, was chomping in the yards waiting for a south-bound passenger train. We waited for the departure by a little fire which a negro was tending with little chips and bits of frayed rope. He just looked at us once, when we came up the grade, then went back to tending his fire.

We could see the engineer leaning out of the cab of the giant locomotive. He was leaning way-out looking for the south-bound train. Probably has some little woman waiting for him up in Seattle, I sort of figured.

The passenger came through rolling hard and the freight whistled twice, backed for slack, and humped ahead, testing air at the same time. We moved away from the fire toward the boxcars. I looked at the old negro, but he didn't look up.

We got on top prepared to get wet. But after we pulled out of the yards we found a gondola and stood in front of it, close to the next box-car, which kept the rain off us.

Daylight came and found us rolling hard to Seattle. Our caulks kept slipping on the steel deck of the car. We were wet and cold. When I closed my eye-lids, a bell would start ringing inside my head so I kept them open. Cash didn't say a word. We were hungry.

We came into the flats below Beacon Hill, when it was getting dark.

The long lay-over in Tacoma slowed us up.

We slacked-down by Spokane Street and took the sidetrack behind the Seattle Hardware Company and out along Railroad Avenue. There were big tarpaulins covering the hatches on the

ships, and longshoremen were coming off shift. We jumped off in the midst of some coming from the Alaska Steamship dock. They looked at us warily.

Well, we're part of the West too, I thought.

Cash's face was taut. The flesh around his lantern jaw was tight and white. I knew my eyes were ugly looking. I was hungry.

"Well, we're broke," I said. "Here's the big town and everything's closed."

But I didn't feel it like I said it. I felt good. Seattle was always a good place to come back to. You felt you could do anything.

Cash said, "Let's hit up a mission."

"Hit a mission like a bum," I said. "We're loggers."

"Well, what the hell," he mumbled, looking at the slimy sidewalk. The longshoremen had quit marching past.

He's fading, I thought. But the idea wasn't so bad. We might as well. We had come from the woods together.

The first place we found was closed. We walked on. A placard on the walk said: Zion Mission, Meet Your Lord, Free Soup.

We followed the steps down, and stepped into a well-lighted, smelly room filled with stiff sitters on wooden benches. Our caulks made a lot of noise, and people looked at us.

We found seats at the back.

The preacher was telling us what the score was when I went to sleep. Cash shook me awake, it must have been some time later because my eyes were burning. He had a bowl of soup with some peculiar looking pieces of something floating around in it surrounded with haloes of yellow grease. There were two crusts on the plate the bowl rested on.

Cash was taking it in.

"It's good," he said.

I took some mouthfuls, but it didn't take. I wasn't that hungry. Maybe tomorrow night I could down it.

The preacher was saying, "If ther're any men who wish to commune privately with our Lord, will they please step into my prayer-room for prayers or confessions, as the need may be."

Everyone was leaving out the door.

Cash stood up, his lantern-jaw set.

"Come on," he said in a whisper. "We'll speak to the Lord."

Now I knew what was wrong with the guy. He believed in the Lord.

I said, "I can't go in there."

"Why not? We're all His children."

"Come on," he said.

I followed him. Just as a matter of curiosity. I wanted to see one of them preachers close.

The preacher stood inside the prayer-room door, closing it after us, smiling genially. I sat down in a chair.

He walked over to a stand on which there was a large Bible. He placed his left hand on it.

"Listen, Oh Lord, to these poor lumberjacks' prayers. Daily they toil in our mighty forests donated to us and the lumber interests by your gracious hand, and who semi-annually find themselves in dire distress on the wind-swept streets of the Seattle Skidroad. Listen, Oh Lord, and pity."

Cash had dropped to his knees, his hands clasped, tears streaming from his eyes and over his lantern-jaw.

I sort of figured I'd seen everything now.

I got onto my knees, my caulks ripping the red carpet.

Cash started wailing.

"Oh Lord we have been down on the Columbia River, we were in bad shape, we stole a meal from the Crown-Zellerbach company, yes we did, Oh Lord, and hope for your loving forgiveness! But what we need now besides your forgiveness is a meal and a job where we can work for you, Oh Lord, praise your gracious name."

Cash got up, his eyes streaming.

The preacher came forward and shook his hand.

"Trust in the Lord," he said.

Then he looked at me, smiling.

"Say Doc," I said, "you got fifty cents that ain't working?"

His thin face grew stern. He lifted his paw.

"The Lord will provide," he said.

We went out, passing through the dark, empty hall and up the steps. It was raining hard.

"So-long Dutch," I said. I started walking away. He followed me.

"Where you going?"

"I'm going to get myself some chuck someplace."

He walked a little further with me, then stopped. His lantern jaw was quivering.

I walked on, feeling better. I had figured there was something wrong with the guy, when he had said he carried cigarettes around with him for guys that smoked, in case they don't have any with them. The Lord too. I was laughing.

★ ★ ★

BILL BUELL—Sonnet to Stravinsky

Upon the suppression of his new orchestral arrangement of the National Anthem.

*You, Stravinsky, come from Russia, where
history has been broken like a bone,
medieval guy-wires cut, and men may dare
to cast out sick sweet note for strong new tone.
Your eyes washed clean by revolution saw
an idol with its gilded surface tarnished;
and ignorant or defiant of our law
(written in old books by generations vanished)
you put sharp chisel to the worn-out paint,
chipped banal triteness off in little flakes,
applied new varnish rich in depth and hue.
You forgot that in this land a saint
must not be altered . . . in our granitic states
men have been murdered for proposing new.*

JAN BREVET—Infallible

*The opium eater, with a smile like a crooked man,
And eyes corroded with lead,
Sees the multitude like a crowd of bees
That buzz in nauseating smoke.
He peeks at life through the huge door,
A fraction open,
Slowly closing in front of him
Like a cataract over an eye.
He sees the world like a huge gorilla locked in a cage.
His body, complete in its abandonment, is tossed like a sack
by the waves. . . .
The worm of his mouth is complete contentment,
Indifferent to indifferent life,
Passing from one dream into the next. . . .
While the stoic world, a spool,
Unwinds. . . .*

THOMAS HOWELLS—Value and Poetry

Value, in the sense I shall use it, is worth of any kind. It attaches to all objects, acts, or states of experience which are accompanied by a sense of human life or associated with that sense. I am not concerned here with the various axiologies. Whether value is subjective or objective, I am interested in the relation I believe it has to poems. In saying that value requires a sense of human life, I am not unmindful of the many valuable poems on grasshoppers, fleas, robins, locomotives, street corners, and ocean beaches. All the poems of this order that come to my mind acquire value, I think, by the assimilation, implicit or explicit, of one or more of their attributes to some human attribute.

The disposition of man to see significant connections between human life and the other activities and objects of the universe is traditional. Though in certain forms of modern philosophy these connections are no longer held to be a source of meaning, they remain a source of value, positive or negative, even for the poets who profess those philosophies.

From the standpoint of other inhabitants of the universe, perhaps value is the device by which man seeks to extend his power and his glory over all. Yet it would be difficult to account for all of his seeking or fabrication on this basis. Whatever may be its validity and its sanctions, value is important to poems and the proper concern of their students.

Is value the thing which the poet tries to represent, or is it, rather, the price exacted of the poet by the requirements of meaningful expression? Let us assume that the poet, working as such, is impelled to represent an object, act, or state of his experience. It affects him as obscure, though strong, moving. This obscure feeling, to be represented adequately, must be represented as meaningful and as valuable. For meaning and value are the basic ways in which we regard what is important to us. Meaning alone is not a sufficient representation of importance, for the poet as such. He is impelled to seek a value. Of all the possible values from which the poet may choose, he selects one or more that seem best fitted to the quality and scope of his experience.

As far as I know, most poems originate with an obscure perception of importance in an event, an object, or a situation. The original datum may be and frequently is naked of explicit value; but it bears a nimbus or it casts a shadow or it makes an impact

which invites the poet to express it as valuable. In this sense, value as related to a poem indicates an attempt of the poet to express the quality of the impact made upon him by the datum of his poem. Value is the dramatic relationship between the observer and the observed, the tension between the experiencer and the thing experienced.

I do not think there is anything peculiarly poetic about this pattern of activity. It may eventuate as a newspaper story, a political party, or an item in a cocktail conversation. It becomes poetic when it eventuates as a poem.

Does the poet ever begin with the value and seek out an appropriate occasion for it? May the value itself be the datum? Structurally speaking, I believe that the composition of the poem begins with the datum. The value may be said to guide him in the search for it; but functioning as a guide, the value is not used as a value but as a sense of inclination toward an unknown datum. Later, in what I have to say about value and form, I hope this point will become clearer.

So value technically is related to the amplification of the poem's datum or point of structural origin. It may precede the datum in the poet's consciousness but not in the poem. Value is not represented in the poem. Then what is its relation to the poem?

Value is not an element in the poem, but a dimension of it, a region in which the poem moves. The poem is placed in this dimension by the poet; and the reader, among his other procedures with the poem, must apprehend this value as dimension and orient himself to it. In one sense, value may be called the environment of the poem.

When we form an opinion about the character and personality of an individual, we not only take note of his ideas, his tone of voice, his general appearance and behavior; but we draw inferences about the culture and mode of life to which he presumably belongs. The individual confronts us as an extension of his world. Whether this is a world dominantly of ideas, of manners, of features, of ancestry, of economic position, of social status, or of occupation depends upon the importance of these respective elements for the individual, upon temperament and capacity for observation of ourselves, and upon the circumstances of our meeting with him.

Similarly, the datum and the poet confront each other, with a resulting amplification of meaning to which the value attaches.

The result depends upon the poet and the poet's world in their interaction with the datum. On the reader a poem, provided that it is authentic and not an exercise in combining words, has an effect which is not wholly derived from the elements the poem contains, but which invokes the places from which it came, the region in which it moves.

Perhaps there are two kinds of value suggested in poetry: one the kind that seems to be anterior to the poem, and the other the kind that seems to be sequent from it.

Sequential value is more or less apprehended by such questions as, what are the implications of the poem, or what is the moral of it? These questions, one raised by intellectuals and the other by the folk, differ in quality but not so much in their motive. The concern of both is with what value follows from the poem, the sequential value. As for anterior value, the questions, what does this poem show about the author's life and personality, or, what does this poem reveal about the intellectual climate of the age of Shakespeare—these questions point to the value out of which the poem has come.

I have discriminated two kinds of value. In my opinion, the discrimination is important in the case of every successful poem, because the anterior value out of which the poem comes differs significantly from the sequential value which proceeds from it. By the poem, the anterior value is changed, however slightly, to accommodate the sequential value.

So the successful poem is a discovery of value, originating in an environment of value which is not only identified but extended, changed, or otherwise affected by the occurrence of the poem.

The experience of reading a poem perhaps resembles the experience of the poet in attaining value with it. The reader, looking curiously at the poem, may grasp enough of its meaning to sense beyond that meaning a latent value which he does not apprehend. His sense of latent value induces him to give his full attention to the meaning. If the full experience occurs, the rhythm and imagery become significant for him; and the meaningful words open like doors upon a valuable place.

The reader may get the datum first or the value. In my observation, readers are more likely to get a fair notion of the value than an accurate view of the datum or a complete understanding of the meaning, especially when the datum is imagistically concrete and its meaning is largely emotional. Many readers are

concerned only with the values of poems; and they are disconcerted when some one asks them how they found their way to the honey on which they feed. The student, who when asked what is said in *Dover Beach*, can reply only that the poem is rather sad, is showing a limited capacity for the enjoyment of poetry; but he is not entirely wasting his time. His sin is in treating the experience of art with the same casualness and brief attention he gives to most of his other experiences, oblivious to the difference between a mouthful of water and the well.

The critic, a trained reader, knows that value, though first in importance, is not necessarily first in time. But the critic is liable to profound misapprehensions in attempting to relate the value to the poem. Let us suppose that a critic possessing a particular value system encounters a poem which attaches to a very different value system. As a critic, the critic should either attack the poet's value system—discuss him as a thinker; or, excluding his own value system, so far as possible, he should discuss the poem in reference to its value system, in order to reveal what is said and suggested and how well. The more usual situation, however, is for the critic, armed with his axiological preferences, to attack the opposed system through its representative poem, finding in the poem those evidences of poetic weakness and ineptitude which the poet's value system would logically, to the critic, entail.

The critic finds that a certain "idea" or "emotion" in a poem is poorly expressed. He is not opposed to what is said: he objects to the way of putting it. But suppose there were no better way of putting it, as far as both the critic and the poet know. In that case, a hypothetical one, is the critic opposing the manner of expression or is he opposing the thing expressed? My belief is that unless the critic is able to think of the formal requirements for expressing a datum better—I do not mean the exact words but the general effect of the amplification—he should admit that he dislikes not only the amplification but the datum and the value the poet seeks to discover with it.

The problem which this situation brings up is that of the relation between value and form. Does form create value, does it reveal value, or does it provide value? By the form of a poem, I mean basically the arrangement which the words of the poem have as distinguished from the individual words which are arranged. The question of whether arrangement can essentially be distinguished from the things arranged need not trouble us here. We are talking

not about essences but of agents and of activities. They may be as discrete as the experience of discreteness.

The way in which words are collocated seems to matter, for if we change the collocation, however slightly, we change their effect. If the arrangement of words could not be changed without changing the value connected with them, we should still not know whether form reveals, provides, or creates the value. But if value were to be lost to any extent by the change, then we should believe that form does create value of a sort.

If the change of form is made in a successful poem, there is, I think, a loss of value—the value of appropriate form. Form does indeed create value for the poem, but only one element or attribute of the value—its appropriateness, as arrangement, to the things arranged. This is a creation by the form, because the value which the poet senses as latent in the datum or the explicit value in which his datum is latent cannot be said to have appropriateness, not before the form exists.

The revisions which poets make are often to achieve an appropriateness which they sense to be lacking in the original. In the process of revision, indeed, the poet may arrive at a form which is appropriate not to the datum and values of the original poem but to those of a different poem. Then, preferring the revised datum or the revised values, the poet may extend the new form over the entire poem and feel that he has found his way to a better poem than he had been attempting to write.

In view of these considerations, I think that form as such creates the value of appropriateness. That value is in the poem as an interior connection between the datum, or point of structural origin, and the meaning, the amplification of the datum. But the appropriateness of the form to other values associated with the poem is, like them, an outside connection. What is the relation of form to those other values?

We may regard the form as a screen for value in general: aesthetic, ethical, cultural, social, political. The datum—an object, act, or state of experience—may arrive at the threshold of the poet's consciousness in a particular form, the one, two, three, or more lines which the poet takes as his nucleus for the poem. He may recognize them as the opening lines or as a part somewhere in the body of the poem he is to write. But the datum will appear to him clothed in the pattern and urgency of a particular form, demanding completion.

Or it may be his task to start with a formless datum—the anonymous feeling unconsciously arising from a flower, a bridge, a conversation, a person. He still has to provide the datum with its appropriate form, with perhaps less of a clue than if the datum were concrete. I am not talking of value here, but of the datum. The datum as a subjective state of experience may be very difficult to distinguish from a value; but it is as datum, not as value, that it gets into the poem.

Whether provided or concurrent, the form which the datum takes will, I think, through its appropriateness to the datum act as a screen to those other values, qualifying some for association with the poem, disqualifying others. Certain types of worth will respond to the urgency of this particular form. If the poet is in doubt whether some value is eligible, he is really doubling the efficacy of his form as a screen. Let him develop the form, and he will see; or he may reconsider it in the fashion I have suggested, revise or make a fresh start.

What if the value precedes the datum in the poet's consciousness? Let us assume that he is employing value as the starting point of the poem, a worth apprehended as a sense of inclination toward an unknown datum. May not such value be said to get into the poem without being screened? Does not the value in this case itself screen the form as well as the datum? I think not. The value guides the poet in the search of his datum; but once he feels he has found it, the test is whether the value is relevant to the datum, and that test occurs when the poet endeavors to relate the datum and the value by an appropriate form. The value does not get into the poem in any case, as we shall see. The form still selects the value with which the poem is connected.

Endeavoring to force value on the poem, the poet may succeed in getting meaning into it. But that is a different matter. Poems on which the poet has tried to force value in this way often have an inadequacy of form to meaning. The appropriate form stands firm as the structure of the datum, a screen of value, a mode of amplification, and a container of meaning as amplification.

As I have said, the values of a poem are not located in the poem. The meaning of the poem is located there. That, I believe, is the technical difference between value and meaning as far as their relations to the poem are concerned. As I have tried to explain, value is either anterior to the poem or sequential from it. The poem points back to the value system it came from, and for-

ward to the modification it has made in that system. The poem as a whole—not merely the form—reveals value, forward and back; it does not possess value.

In what sense does a poem possess meaning but not value? Well, in the discrimination I have attempted to make between meaning and value, meaning is an affair of intelligibility whereas value is an affair of acceptability. Words and ideas are intelligible. So are emotions when they are directed toward intelligible things. Values are acceptable. I do not say that value systems are not intelligible, though they often apparently are not to people who adhere to different value systems. They are not intelligible in the same way that ideas are intelligible. A value system that can be entirely reduced to words and understood as ideas is no longer a value system but a set of concepts—an intellectual system. A value system as such is intelligible in terms of its acceptability or its unacceptability, not as “pure” intelligibility.

For instance, we may say that we do not know what is meant by the word “freedom.” It is a vague word, we say; we do not understand it, and we think that people who like to use it do not understand it either. But a word like “freedom” represents not a concept but a value; to be understood, it must be understood as acceptable or as not acceptable. By trying to understand it as a concept, we may indicate that we are not content with it as a value. And we may indicate that we are monists in value, intelligibility being the only one we admit, or at least the one we insist upon having mixed in some fashion with all others.

So, if I am right, poems may be said to “possess” meaning in the way that any type of discourse possesses it. I see no point here in debating whether the words possess the meaning or whether the meaning is in us. As long as we also possess the words, the problem of spatial location would seem not to be very acute.

Such location is important, however, in the problem of how value is related to the poem. Many students of poetry might object to my excluding value from the form and contents of the poem. But I am far from intending to slight the relation of value to poetry. Value is not in the poem. However, the poem is in value. As I said, value is the dimension in which the poem moves, and it moves forward as well as back. This location of the poem in a particular value system is achieved, first of all, by the poet; and the achievement is repeated by every successive, if successful, reader. The poet sets up the lines of connection between the poem

and the values, forward and back. The reader has to maintain them.

The reason value does not get into the poem as its essence, so to speak, is not that the poet is unwilling. Given his appetite for worth, he would put it in if he could. But value happens to be the kind of thing which through its generality is not susceptible to the particularity of content and the specificity of form which prevail in poems.

Values, then, are dependent upon readers in a way that meanings are not. And even in the best traditions of reading, the values of any poem are probably altered in time. Only a contemporary is likely to have a precise apprehension of what I have called sequential value. For as this value enters the tradition, it will be modified by the sequential values of further poems. The later student may, on the other hand, have a better notion of anterior value than a contemporary, unless the value has become obscured as a worth or in its implicit connections with certain data and forms.

In order to test the applicability of these conjectures, I shall attempt to discuss a few poems with regard to datum, meaning, and value.

Matthew Arnold's *Dover Beach* opens with a picture of a sea in full tide on a tranquil evening with, however, "the grating roar or pebbles," which the waves draw back and fling onto the beach. Now, apparently, the datum in this poem is the conflicting impressions of the calm sea and night, on the one hand, and the roar of the pebbles, on the other. Obscurely perceiving some importance in the conflict, the poet is led to his line "The eternal note of sadness in." By this time, the form of the poem is established, and the amplification of the datum is to be one of sadness as far as the emotional element is concerned. From the word "eternal" it is not hard for Arnold to get the Sophocles on the Aegean and then to the Sea of Faith. Human misery, which Sophocles heard on the Aegean, is the link between them. Now the idea comes into the meaning and is amplified in the well known theme. What is the value associated with this poem?

Love is not a value for this poem but an element in the emotion of sadness. I should say that the value for Arnold is in the conflict between the Sophoclean perception of human misery and the faith which once "by this distant northern sea" was full of the

conviction that God would provide what the world does not, for all its beauty, the world which

*Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain . . .*

The conflict in the values, I observe, seems to proceed from the conflict in the datum between the calm fullness of the sea at the beginning of the poem and the grating roar.

Archibald MacLeish's *Dover Beach*—*A Note to that Poem* offers an interesting contrast in datum, meaning, and value. The poem begins with these lines:

*The wave withdrawing
Withers with seaward rustle of flimsy water
Sucking the sand down: dragging at empty shells:
The roil after its settling: too smooth: smothered . . .*

The rest of the poem says that after a man is forty, he is foolish to wait for the tide to come over him. Anyway, "it's the outward wave that spills the inward forward;" and when the young men come with their "toppling lift,"

*Let them go over us all I say with the thunder of
What's to be next in the world. It's we will be under it!*

Perhaps the datum of MacLeish's poem is his memory of *Dover Beach*; or, as I think more likely, it is the perception of the withdrawing wave, which may have invoked the thematic part of *Dover Beach*. The first four lines of the poem proceed from the word "withdrawing," for they contain other images in pattern: "flimsy", "withers", "empty", "too smooth", and "smothered." The value seems to be calm acceptance of a retreating age by one who anticipates a radical change requiring the expense of self. This value is in contrast with despair at change and loss of security in Arnold's poem.

That, at least, is how MacLeish appears to see the respective values of the two poems; but perhaps the real contract is between the calm private sea of MacLeish's mind and the public storm in Arnold's.

Some readers might wonder whether this method of analysis is applicable only to lyric poems, or whether it may be used as well in the study of narrative, dramatic, and didactic poetry. In Pope's *An Essay on Criticism* datum, form, meaning, and value, are, I believe, related in the manner I have proposed. The whole poem, in its emphasis as well as its topical matter, comes as an amplification of the situation in the first four lines:

*'Tis hard to say, if greater want of skill
Appear in writing or in judging ill;
But, of the two, less dang'rous is th' offence
To tire our patience, than mislead our sense.*

Skill in writing and judging, and the lack of skill, are developed in the amplification of the poem. I suppose these topics to have originated in some mental state, and ultimately in an experience of the author. The datum here is an intellectual situation. I do not say that it is identical with the first four lines of the poem; but since the rest of the poem is in complete harmony with them, the datum, wherever it is in the poem, is clothed in the same form and associated with the same value. That value has something to do with the contract made between poet and critic, particularly the suggestion of greater tolerance for the former. But in its larger sense, the value is the worth or presumptive validity of the poetic and critical tradition from Horace to Pope. It is in that dimension that the poem moves.

For Milton's "Paradise Lost", we have good reason to believe that the datum is represented by the lines:

*. . . I thence
Invoke thy aid to my adventurous song,
That with no middle flight intends to soar
Above the Aonian mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in prose and rhyme.*

We know that here is the obscure feeling of importance in a situation, a feeling which Milton had preserved for the many years he had waited to write his epic. The situation is that of his poetic talent; in these lines it becomes a datum as a sense of uniqueness in the form of greatness. With that form of greatness, and that sense of uniqueness, only the profoundest of values would be consonant—those associated with the meaning of the lines about justifying God's ways to men.

ROLAND RYDER-SMITH
Pan of the Ocean's Edge

*How often since, in nebulous twilight hours
Before the sun, have I not searched for hoofprints
Pressed into night-washed sand—receding waves
At moon-drawn ebb—to follow their curious contours
Through moist aisles of salty auburn weed,
To dawn's pale promontory, hoping to hear
Again his warm tones thrill the tidal caves.
For long I rested on my oars where evening
Slowly claimed the star endappled sea,
Intent to catch once more the first green echo
Of his lay piped on a spiral conch—
His invocation to an ocean Muse—
Who called each timid creeper on the shoreline,
Brother, and every scaly swimmer, Friend.*

WENDELL ANDERSON

three poems from *Hawks' Hunger*

Death-Days in August

*There is wind through the willows,
Shadow-pressing through the summer air . . .
In the last days of August now
The Fall darkens from the north.
Swift swallows mottle the grass with winking wings,
And from every rail the sparrows, chattering,
Teeth the fences with their lines.*

*Now the black-white Shrike, with murder
In the notches of his beak,
Flickers fleet as twilight,
Fixing prey upon the thorn,
And overhead the Falcon cuts the summer sky
With frost-gray wings
As cool and curved as knives . . .
And commits death as sure . . . as swift
As winter air.*

Airmen at Midway

*At Midway tears of falling wings trailed
spent as broken birds across the sky,
and others upward went with wings
as strong as hawks,
and sought to break the whip
that lashed the eager eye.*

*Packs of engines snarled the air
and wove in tracer skeins . . .
the criss-cross patterns of a war,
and where they crossed there someone
gave the light of living eyes
and went forever west. . . .*

The Roughleg Hawk

*A lump of feather sleeps on top the telephone pole,
and lets the rolls and rims of sage-brush plain
drift smoke-like into sky. . .
Beneath the pole are broken bones and rotting fur,
while slumped above, a roughleg rests his hook,
a head against his breast.*

WENDELL ANDERSON—*The Foetus*

*Spasmed into amoebic being by urge of man and woman,
the child, a throbbing clot, congeals to the womb.
Here in the early month within the mother twitching,
suspended like a bat it slumbers in the womb. . .
From a knot of pumping blood expanding into drooping
orchid-curves of spine and brain,
spreading livid stains through spurting threads of nerve,
tender as palms of flowers.
Into prodigious size it swells its bulb of head
and grows the pounding centre of its belly
to tubes which flush its mother's heart,
and webs the moonlight of its bones
through night of womb,
while slow as snails it shapes its hands and feet and nails.
And then . . . complete it lies,
a naked clasp which moves unseen beneath the sight,
until the pull of quaking tide compels it burst
the fragile shell and downward wracks it,
 blind and strangling
 into light.*

Upon the Bridges of This City

*Upon the many bridges of this city I have stood,
hearing the bull-horns of its power
sound against the hills. . .
hearing the music of its traffic
blinking in blurring wheels between the beams
of bridges, bent like accordions across the river.
Hearing the boom of its bull-horns
blowing down the river . . .
lowing on the river . . .
Seeing its stacks of freighters
sulphurous as craters
smoking the stream.*

*And in a dream,
I watch the roofs rise,
cubing the skies. . .
Beyond me horizons in smoke and mist of night
melting until I see only
the skeletons of cranes and spars and stacks
and palpitating neon
whose musical message . . .
CROWN FLOUR CROWN FLOUR CROWN FLOUR
I hear like heart's beat
pounding its blood into the skies.*

HAROLD EBY—The Sins of the Writers

In 1940 Mr. Archibald McLeish, alarmed by the debacle engulfing Europe and threatening America, put on sackcloth and scattered ashes for certain contemporary writers. He charged that many of them and especially the writers of war novels had betrayed their native land by weakening faith in its high purposes. These writers encouraged softness and cynicism when Spartan virtues and unfaltering faith would be required if the enemies of all mankind were to be defeated. He branded these writers as the "Irresponsibles."

The next year Mr. Van Wyck Brooks confessed not only for himself but also for most of the writers of the twenties. Penitentially, he gave a bill of particulars and sought for the reasons. These writers, he charged, "lived with their fixed ideas in a vacuum, they were victims of inbreeding, poisoning one another with their despair and poisoning society also; they had come to represent the suicide of the human spirit. . . ."

Similar charges have been made by Howard Mumford Jones, Lewis Mumford and other prominent members of the literary profession. While some writers have denied the indictments, sufficient numbers have agreed to justify the belief that this was to be a dominant mood of the critical forties.

By now the feeling of disaster, the sense of extreme urgency, has passed. Victory is a reasonable prospect, war emergencies have been overcome, the nation is fully converted to a war footing. Already the uncharted future has unrolled to the problems of the peace to be. Signs of a return to more normal habits begin to show among writers and critics. Sudden repentances have a way of dissolving once the emotional peak of conversion has passed. Old skepticisms reappear. Writers get back to their writing and Tories prepare to harvest the let-down.

Although these shifts or changes are to be expected among the generality of the writing tribe, who are notoriously unstable, no such flighty stuff is in the character of Mr. Bernard DeVoto. Unforgiving as the proverbial elephant, he proposes to hold writers to their confession; even more he intends to add some previously unlisted crimes to the indictment. These accusations are to be found in the recently published *The Literary Fallacy* which is a revision of lectures delivered for the Pattern Foundation at Indiana University.

Mr. DeVoto, like his beloved pioneers, has unusual talents in a free-for-all fight. He has an added incentive for this occasion in the person of Van Wyck Brooks, an old victim from the days when *The Ordeal of Mark Twain* aroused the wrath of Mr. DeVoto. Seizing the body of Mr. Brooks for a handy club, the bruiser from the West proceeds to knock down all the esthetes within range of Van Wyck Brooks' influence.

Mr. DeVoto's thesis is designed to create the impression of reason and common sense, but in reality it is a cleverly disguised booby-trap. "Reduced to general terms, the literary fallacy assumes: that a culture may be understood and judged solely by means of its literature, that literature embodies truly and completely both the values and the content of a culture, that literature is the highest expression of a culture, that literature is the measure of life, and finally that life is subordinate to literature."

No one but an unbalanced and rash dreamer would have such an infernal device on his premises. Such words as *solely*, *truly* and *completely*, *highest expression*, *measure of life*, *life subordinate* to are traps which betray the author's hostile intention. Not literature or science or religion or any other special activity of man can be successfully defended when any one of them makes such absolute or sweeping pretensions. It is true that Mr. DeVoto tries to give some proof for his charge that the many writers of the twenties subscribed to this fallacy, but in reality he proves that they took their profession too seriously and were inadequately equipped to be final judges of the culture of their decade. Mr. DeVoto could make a better case for a belief in that thesis by Emerson, whom he holds up as a model for American writers to follow. Indeed the closest approximation to this flamboyant claim is to be discovered in literary credos such as Sidney's *Defense of Poesy*, Wordsworth's *Preface* to the *Lyrical Ballads*, and Shelley's *Defense of Poetry*. This fallacy, therefore, is not a unique failing of the twenties, nor a sufficient explanation of its failures.

Nor can writers be justly attacked as the chief sinners in this matter. Every profession has its enthusiastic followers who are tempted to express extravagant assertions about the supreme importance of their calling. Certainly the clergy, scientists, engineers, business men have made such statements. This fallacy is not peculiar to writers. It is a very general, a very human weakness.

A much more pertinent charge is made by Mr. DeVoto, when he asserts that many writers of the twenties failed to know the

American culture which they proceeded to condemn. They failed, he maintains, because their method of knowing that culture was in large part an "esthetic" intuition which is an unreliable and inadequate procedure for obtaining accurate knowledge about a civilization. This method produced among writers and literary critics an ivory tower isolation, a sense of superiority, and an inevitable sterility.

"In the long arc of time when history comes to describe the culture of America between two wars, it will not be American ideas or the American way of life that looks tawdry, cheap, empty and base. It will be the half-bushel of writers who presumed to find them so on the basis of a blend of arrogance, ignorance, and beautiful ideas which would seem craven except that it is first of all ridiculous. Seeking for a phrase which will convey the quality of that literature, history may sum it up as the Age of Ignominy."

Malcolm Cowley has defended the writers against this attack by a reply printed in a recent issue of *The New Republic*, but his defense is too timid, too apologetic for success against such a slashing opponent. Modest claims for overlooked virtues and polite probings of some chinks in Mr. DeVoto's armor will not do. The charges are too serious for mere defensive tactics. Only attack can win.

In the process of holding these writers responsible for their ignorance of the American scene Mr. DeVoto employs an unfair, even an arrogant standard as the measure of their failure. One of the easiest tricks in the repertoire of the expert is to expose the ignorance of other men in the details of said expert's specialty. Thus Mr. DeVoto gives two examples of the glaring ignorance of American writers of the decade—ignorance of the great achievements of John Wesley Powell and failure to realize the great advances made in medicine during the twenties, such as new treatments for burns. All that DeVoto says about these two overlooked examples of cultural achievement are true enough, but any expert in the field of American social history could give many other examples equally overlooked and unknown to all but a few fellow historians. Certainly historians of the future will continue to turn up fresh areas unnoticed or ignored even by the best living experts. It is nearly certain that no contemporary will make the definitive evaluation of this American life between two wars. To hold writers responsible for failure to achieve this is obviously unjust. It is also true that future historians will regard the literature of the period as a valu-

able and revealing source of evidence about the culture of the decade.

A fair judgment of this literature must rest on the premise that literature is one among many elements which make up a culture. Such a judgment must understand that creative writing does not have as its distinguished method the research procedures of science. It must see that writers depend on personal experience, emotional responses, and special skills in such procedures as symbolism, condensation, representation, and the evocation of emotional attitudes. Once these premises are granted, writers can be properly judged in the role they play as a part of the culture of any period. Writers are subject to error; they often follow blind alleys or become eccentric to the main stream of a culture. However, it is also true that they give a kind of evidence that can anticipate and precede the judgments of science. A sensitive man can convey the quality of life in his day by responding sensitively to the manifold stimuli that surround him. Nor do such men have to be the so-called sane and well-balanced personalities some may expect. Quite often it is the unbalanced personality who first detects, by the very fact that he exaggerates, those beginning stresses and strains which a generation later all men can see. He serves the function of a human magnifying glass.

The literature of the twenties was symptomatic of the culture of the twenties. The weaknesses of the decade were vividly expressed as Mr. DeVoto himself hammers home; the accomplishments were perhaps unduly neglected, but certainly the weaknesses were the crucial issue as we now know all too well. It is permitted of the artist that he can make his point by exaggeration; that he can track down an attitude or a way of life to its ultimate results, even though actuality will never duplicate such an extreme course. Thereby, people may profit more by art than by life.

While it is true that some of the writers gave way to a cynicism and a despair that was not justified by events, yet we must not assume as Mr. DeVoto and some of the other critics have done, that we are now out of danger. The American people have risen to the challenge of external enemies, but there still remain dangerous reefs and shoals ahead. We are in very real danger. This is no staged conflict with victory a pre-determined conclusion. Complacency and self-satisfaction are as dangerous as the despair which Mr. DeVoto charges against the writers. It is also fair to remind

him that Mark Twain gave way to alarm and despair, yet remains a great and truly representative writer.

The criticism which remains has not been stated with sufficient force and clarity by Mr. DeVoto. It is that there was a dangerous tendency among the writers of the twenties to reject faith in the common man, which is, of course, the bedrock faith of democracy. Some of the writers were on the side of the enemy, just as there were and still are powerful forces in our culture which are dangerously undemocratic. How close we were to disaster is sufficiently proved by the shrillness and the anger of Mr. DeVoto and the other critics of the writers in the decade between the two wars. Evidently they got the scare of their lives and are taking it out upon the writers. To blame these writers for all the sins of a generation is patently silly. Who can escape his share of the guilt?



HENRY MILLER—Day in the Park

Fragment from "The Air-Conditioned Nightmare"

Hollywood reminds me vividly of Paris by reason of the fact that there are no children in the street. As a matter of fact, now that I think about it, I don't recall seeing children about anywhere except in the Negro quarters of certain Southern cities. Charleston and Richmond particularly. I remember a boy in Charleston, a colored boy about eight years of age, who impressed me by his impudent swagger. He was a sawed-off, hammered-down runt in long pants with an unlit ciragette hanging from the corner of his mouth. He sauntered into the drug store where I was having a drink, looking for all the world like a miniature edition of Sam Langford. At first I thought he was a Lilliputian, but no, he was just a kid, no more than seven or eight years old. His head didn't even reach to the top of the bar, despite the mannish hat he was wearing. And though he was looking up at us, he gave the impression of looking down, surveying us as if we were fresh vegetables or something. He walked round the bar to where the soda water jerker was standing and coolly asked for a match. The man pretended to be angry and tried to shoo him off, as though he were a big horsefly. But the kid stood his ground and looked up at him with humorous defiance. He had one hand in his pocket, and with the other hand he was nonchalantly twirling a bunch of keys attached to a piece of twine. As the man behind the bar began to assume a more menacing attitude, the kid calmly turned his back on him and strolled over to the rack where the magazines were stacked up. There was an endless series of magazines called "Comics" on the lower shelf just above his head. He moved down the line, reading the titles slowly—Planet, Heroic, Thrilling, Speed, Smash, Jungle, Exciting, Fight, Wings, Startling, True, Magic, Wonderful, etc., etc.—a seemingly inexhaustible variation on the same theme. Finally he picked one out and leisurely flipped the pages. When he had satisfied himself that he wanted it, he tucked it under his arm and then, as he came slowly back towards the bar, he bent down to pick up a parlor match which he found lying on the floor. As he got to the bar he flipped a coin high in the air; it bounced on the counter and fell behind the bar. He did it like a showman, with punctilious braggadocio, which enraged the clerk no end. Meanwhile he looked us all over once again in that impudent way of his and, striking the parlor match on the marble slab

of the bar, he lit his cigarette. He held his hand out for the change without looking at the clerk, like a business man too abstracted to be conscious of such a trivial thing as change. When he felt the pennies in his hand he turned his head slightly and spat on the floor. With that, of course, the clerk made a pass for him but missed. The kid had made a running slide to the doorway. There he paused a moment, grinned insolently at all and sundry and suddenly thumbed his nose at us. Then he took to his heels like a frightened rabbit.

Later, strolling about the Negro quarter with Rattner, I encountered him again, this time leaning against a lamp post reading the "Comics" magazine which he had just bought. He seemed thoroughly absorbed, removed from the world. His hat was tilted back on his head and he had a tooth-pick in his mouth. He looked like a broker who had just finished a hard day on the floor of the Exchange. I felt like ordering a Scotch and Soda for him and placing it within his reach without disturbing him. I wondered what the devil he could be reading that held him so enthralled. He had picked out an issue called "Jungle" with a lurid cover depicting a half-naked girl in the arms of a sex-crazed gorilla. We stopped a few feet away to watch him. He never once looked up; he was absolutely impervious to the world.

What a contrast to Bruce and Jacquelin, whom I met in Albuquerque! Bruce was six and Jacquelin about four, I should say. There were the children of Lowell and Lona Springer at whose auto court I was staying for a few days. Lowell worked at the Standard Station at the western end of the town; his wife, Lona, ran a fountain at the entrance to the court. Simple, natural people who seemed happy just to be alive. It was a delight to talk to them. They were intelligent and sensitive, and gracious as only the common people of the world can be. Lowell, the young husband, I was especially intrigued with. He seemed to be to be about the most good-natured person I had ever encountered. You didn't care whether he had any other qualities or not—his goodness of heart was like a tonic. His extraordinary patience and gentleness with the children won my admiration. No matter how busy he was, and he seemed to be working all hours of the day and night, he always had time to answer their innumerable questions or to mend their toys or to bring them a drink when they clamored for it.

The children used to play all day in the court. After a little

time, seeing that I left my door open, they got friendly and began to visit me. Soon they began to make known to me that there was a park nearby, where there were lions and tigers and skups and sand piles. They were too well-behaved to ask me outright to take them there, but they threw broad hints in their childish way. "Do you have to work all day every day?" they would ask. "No," I said, "one day I'll take a day off, and then we'll go to see the lions and tigers, yes?" That made them terribly excited. Ten minutes later little Jacquelin put her head in the doorway to ask if I was going to work much longer today. "Let's go in your car," she said. "It's a beautiful car."

I was afraid to take them in the car, so I asked Lona if it would be all right to walk them to the park—could they walk that far? "Oh, heavens, yes," she said, "they can outwalk me."

I went back and told the youngsters to make themselves ready. "We're all ready," said Bruce, "We're waiting for you." And with that the two of them got me by the two hands and started leading me out of the court.

The park seemed like a good mile off, and we had a lot of fun pretending to lose our way and find it again. They were running ahead of me most of the time, taking short cuts through the tall grass. "Hurry up! Hurry up!" they would yell. "It'll soon be time to feed the lions."

There was an extraordinary grove of trees set in a patch of golden light, a setting I had never expected to find in Albuquerque. It reminded me of a Derain landscape, so golden and legendary it was. I threw myself on the grass and the kids tumbled about like acrobats. In the distance I could hear the lions roaring. Jacquelin was thirsty and kept tugging at me to lead her to the fountain. Bruce wanted to help feed the lions. I wanted simply to lie there forever in the golden lake of light and watch the new sap green moving like mercury through the transparent leaves of the trees. The children were working over me like industrious gnomes to rouse me from the trance; they were tickling my ear drums with blades of grass and pushing and pulling as if I were a fat behemoth. I pulled them on top of me and began tumbling them about like young cubs.

"I want a drink of water, Henry," begged Jacquelin.

"He's not Henry, he's Mr. Miller," said Bruce.

"Call me Henry," I said. "That's my real name."

"Do you know what my name is?" said Bruce. "It's Bruce Michael Springer."

"And what's your name?" said Jacquelin.

"My name is Henry Valentine Miller."

"Valentine! That's a pretty name," said Bruce. "My father's name is Lowell—and my mother's name is Lona. We used to live in Oklahoma. That was years ago. Then we moved to Arkansas."

"And then to Albuquerque," said little Jacquelin, pulling me by the sleeve to get me to my feet.

"Are there any camels or elephants here?" I asked.

"Elephants? What are elephants?" asked Bruce.

"I want to see the tigers," said Jacquelin.

"Yes, let's see the elephants," said Bruce. "Are they tame?"

We moved towards the playground, the children running ahead and clapping their hands with joy. Jacquelin wanted to be put on the skups. So did Bruce. I seated them and began swinging them gently. "Higher!" screamed Jacquelin. "Higher! Higher!" I ran from one to the other pushing as hard as I could. It was afraid that Jacquelin might lose her grip. "Push harder!" she yelled. "Push *me!*" yelled Bruce.

I thought I would never get them down from the skups. "I almost touched the sky, didn't I?" said Bruce. "I bet my father could touch the sky. My father used to take us here every day. My father . . ." He went on about his father. My father this, my father that.

"And Lona?" I said, "what about Lona?"

"She's my mother," said Bruce.

"She's *my* mother, too," said Jacquelin.

"Yes," said Bruce, "she comes, too, sometimes. But she's not as strong as my father."

"She gets tires," said Jacquelin.

We were approaching the birds and the animals. "I want some peanuts," said Jacquelin. "Please buy me some peanuts, Henry," she said coaxingly.

"Have you any money?" I asked.

"No, you've got money, haven't you?" she said.

"My father has lots of money," said Bruce. "He gave me two pennies yesterday."

"Where are they?" I asked.

"I spent them. He gives me money every day—all I want. My father makes lots of money. More than Lona."

"I want peanuts!" said Jacquelin, stamping her foot.

We got some peanuts and some ice cream cones and some jelly beans and some chewing gum. They ate everything at once, as if they had been starved.

We were standing in front of the dromedaries. "Give them some of your ice cream," I suggested to Jacquelin. She wouldn't do it. She said it would make them sick. Bruce, I noticed, was hastily finishing his ice cream cone.

"Supposing we get them some beer," I said

"Yes, yes," said Bruce eagerly, "let's get some beer." Quite as though that were the customary thing to do. Then he paused a moment to reflect. "Won't they get drunk?" he asked.

"Sure," I said. "They'll get very drunk."

"Then what'll they do?" he asked delightedly.

"They'll stand on their hands maybe or . . ."

"Where are their hands?" he said. "Are those his hands?" and he pointed to the front feet.

"He's got his hands in his pocket now," I said. "He's counting his money."

Jacquelin was tickled at the idea. "Where's his pocket?" she asked. "What does he want money for?" asked Bruce.

"What do *you* want money for?" I answered.

"To buy candy."

"Well, don't you think *he* likes to buy candy too, once in a while?"

"But he can't talk!" said Bruce. "He wouldn't know what to ask for."

"He can too talk!" said Jacquelin.

"You see!" I said, turning to Bruce. "And he can whistle."

"Yes, *he* can whistle," said Jacquelin. "I heard him once."

"Make him whistle now," said Bruce.

"He's tired now," I said.

"Yes, he's very tired," said Jacquelin.

"He can't whistle neither," said Bruce.

"He can too whistle," said Jacquelin.

"He can't!" said Bruce.

"He can!" said Jacquelin, "can't he, Henry?"

We moved on to where the bears and foxes and pumas and llamas were. I had to stop and read every inscription for Bruce.

"Where's India?" he asked, when I read him about the Bengal tiger.

"India's in Asia," I answered.

"Where's Asia?"

"Asia's across the ocean."

"Very far?"

"Yes, very far."

"How long does it take to get there?"

"Oh, about three months," I said.

"By boat or by aeroplane?" he asked.

"Listen, Bruce," I said, "how long do you think it would take to get to the moon?"

"I don't know," he said. "Maybe two weeks. Why, do people go to the moon sometimes?"

"Not very often," I said.

"And do they come back?"

"Not always."

"What's it like on the moon? Have you ever been there? Is it cold? Do they have animals there like here—and grass and trees?"

"They have everything, Bruce, just like here. Peanuts, too."

"And ice cream?" he said

"Yes, only it tastes differently."

"How does it taste?"

"It tastes more like chewing gum."

"You mean it doesn't melt?"

"No, it never melts," I said.

"That's funny," he said. "Why doesn't it melt?"

"Because it's rubbery."

"I'd rather have this ice cream," he said. "I like it to melt."

We moved on to where the birds were sequestered. I felt sorry for the eagles and condors cooped up in tiny cages. They sat ruefully on their perches as if they knew their wings were atrophying. There were birds of brilliant plumage, which hopped around on the ground like chippies; they came from remote parts of the world and were as exotic as the places they came from. There were peacocks too, incredibly vain and, like society women, seemingly of no use to the world except to display their vulgarity. The ostriches were more interesting—tough bimbos, you might say—with strong individualities and plenty of malice. Just to look at their long, muscular necks made me think of thimbles, broken glass and other inedibles. I missed the kangaroo and the giraffe, such forlorn creatures, and so intimately connected with

our intra-uterine life. There were foxes, of course, creatures which somehow never impress me as being very foxy, perhaps because I've only seen them in menageries. And at last we came to the monarchs of the jungle pacing restlessly back and forth like monomaniacs. To see the lion and tiger caged up is to me one of the cruellest sights in the world. The lion always looks inexpressibly sad, bewildered rather than infuriated. One has an irresistible desire to open the cage and let him run amok. A caged lion somehow always makes the human race look mean and petty. Every time I see lions and tigers in the zoo I feel that we ought to have a cage for human beings too, one of each kind and each in his proper setting: the priest with his altar, the lawyer with his fat, silly law books, the doctor with his instruments of torture, the politician with his dough bag and his wild promises, the teacher with his dunce cap, the policeman with his club and revolver, the judge with his female robes and gavel, and so on. There ought to be a separate cage for the married couple, so that we could study conjugal bliss with a certain detachment and impartiality. How ridiculous we would look if we were put on exhibition! The human peacock! And no studded fan to hide his pusillanimous figure! The laughing stock of creation, that's what we would be.

It was time to be getting home. I had to tear the children gently away. Again we walked beneath the fresh green leaves of the trees that stood in the golden light. Near by ran the Rio Grande, her bed littered with gleaming boulders. Around the broad plain of Albuquerque a great circle of hills which towards dusk assume a variety of fascinating hues. Yes, a land of enchantment, not so much because of what is visible as because of what is hidden in the arid wastes. Walking with the two children in this boundless space I suddenly thought of that South American writer, the poet who wrote about kidnapping children, and the weird, fantastic journey over the pampas in an atmosphere of lunar splendor. I wondered what it would be like to make the rest of the trip with Bruce and Jacquelin in tow. How different my experiences would be! What delicious conversations too! The more I thought about it, the more obsessive became my desire to borrow them of their parents.

Presently I noticed that Jacquelin was getting tired. She sat down on a rock and looked about her wistfully. Bruce was running ahead, blazing the trail, as it were. "Do you want me to

carry you?" I asked Jacquelin. "Yes, Henry, please carry me, I'm so tired," she said, putting out her arms. I lifted her up and placed her little arms around my neck. The next moment the tears were in my eyes. I was happy and sad at the same time. Above all I felt the desire to sacrifice myself. To live one's life without children is to deny oneself a great realm of emotion. Once I had carried my own child this way. Like Lowell Springer I had indulged her every whim. How can one say No to a child? How can one be anything but a slave to one's own flesh and blood?

It was a long walk back to the house. I had to put her down now and then to catch my breath. She was very coy now, flirtatious almost. She knew she had me at her mercy.

"Can't you walk the rest of the way, Jacquelin?" I asked, testing her out.

"No, Henry, I'm too tired." And she held out her arms again appealingly.

Her little arms! The feel of them against my neck melted me completely. Of course, she wasn't nearly as tired as she pretended to be. She was exercising her female charms on me, that was all. When we reached the house and I set her down, she began to frisk about like a colt. We had found a discarded toy in back of the house. The unexpected discovery of something she had completely forgotten revived her magically. An old toy is so much better than a new one. Even to me, who had not played with it, the thing possessed a secret charm. The memories of happy hours seemed to be embedded in it. The very fact that it was worn and dilapidated caused it to create a feeling of warmth and tenderness. Yes, Jacquelin was terribly happy now. She forgot me completely. She had found an old love.

I watched her with fascination. It seemed so completely honest and just to pass like that from one thing to another without thought or consideration. That is a gift which children possess in common with very wise people. The gift of forgetting. The gift of detachment. I went back to the cabin and sat there dreamin' for a full hour. Presently a messenger boy arrived with money for me. That brought me back to life, to the monkey world of human values. Money! The very word sounded insane to me. The broken toy in the refuse pile seemed infinitely more valuable and meaningful to me. Suddenly, I realized that Albuquerque was a town with stores and banks and moving picture shows. A town like any other town. The magic had gone out of it. The mountains

began to assume a touristic look. It began to rain. It never rains in Albuquerque at this time of the year. But it did just the same. It poured. In the little clearance where the children used to play there was now an enormous puddle. Everything had changed. I began to think of sanitariums and deflated lungs, of the little cups which the aeroplane corporations place conveniently beside your seat. Between the cabins a continuous sheet of rain fell slantwise. The children were silent and out of sight. The outing was over. There was neither joy nor sorrow left—just a feeling of emptiness.

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LOWELL RICHARDS—Willow

*Adolescent willow with slight waist, now
You lean a little, charming the sight,
Not knowing you will turn to weeping
In full round middle age.*

CAROL ELY HARPER
Wooden Sandals for a Doctor

My darling, I found these verses among some old papers of mine today. They may amuse you as they have me.

Those early days!—when I, ill, met you—our small town's new doctor! . . .

*My love, shadows close over
your weary white face, as you
sit beside me. Your grey
eyes are steady, but alone.
In falling night wine shadows
you look away from me . . Now
I turn my face from you, for
you might move and surprise
me in my love. . . I must be calm,
I must relax the rushing of my
heart—for you might touch me and
feel the hard beat and know me
only as another fool, and rise
abruptly and go. . . Sit quietly
awhile. . . I, ill, shall be as if
I am alone. . . silent. . . Your cold
white face shall be colored with
thick long bladed shadow for me.*

*I did not think that I should
ever love like this! I sink
upon watery, worshipful knees!
My throat fevered with fright!
dried with unspoken pleasure and pain!
But here despair and hope plunge in me
like snorting stallions hitched
either side a cart (my heart!)
wrenching riotously to part me
in the middle with their struggles!*

*But no, I shall not
tell you that I love
you. Thus I may
escape some agony.*

*Would you hesitate—and turn—
in some dark and graceful garden—
if I beckoned? if I lifted my
tender, moonlit, flowering thicket
and disclosed to you the green-
blue ombre well of my devodion? . . . (I
with my perplexed and fascinated
eyes, I with my numbed body
chilled from being too vividly
alive, I with love like a knife
between my lips) . . . would you stare
with greywhite thinking face—then drink?*

*No! I am determined!
I shall not tell you
that I love you! The word
is much too bruised from
being bandied fang to fang to
molar in the public mouth!*

*Yet . . . perhaps I had better not
disguise me as I am . . . but
come and sit upon your doorstep
with my battered shabby hat
upturned within my hands, a yawning,
empty hat . . . and shut my eyes . . .
(for love has made me blind)—O if
I beg—will you give me alms?*

*Why do I who have been lavishly
ornamented with the most fabulous
jewels of earth splutter them off
in mutinous derision to run raggedly
after you? I was resplendent in lace
of green leaves and ripe yellow harvest
leaves and vineyard purple. I wore
the cold hot burst of all oceans
all rains upon my hands in dark
settings (vast continents!) I wore
a crown of constellations—O shrilling
light!—planets running onto the ground!
But now I am bare! I rush, forgetting
splendor, here on thorns! In haste
to overtake you I cannot choose my
path! My clattering, wooden sandals,
carved in inexperience, flew off me
at my first wild leap! My feet are
stained and running blood. Desire is
a thorn gluttoning. (to press my mouth
against your mouth!) O turn and
kneel and leave your lips upon my
wounds! Where stars were braided in my hair
where Africa and Asia blazed upon
my hands—where leaves and fruit
enclosed me—O give me—for
my nakedness—you instead!*

*No. beloved, this is no wandering
of my mind! You exist! You live
by easy breath . . . You are rocked in
earth's bed . . . The repeating dawn
boils and brightens above you . . .
Against your back returns the
question of the night . . . You are*

*at least half mortal! . . . You have
sat beside me! My hand has lain
tormented against the fine grey
cloth across your quiet knee . . .*

*I do not hope ever
to attain to you . . .
Your body is too con-
sciously subordinated.
Your emotions
too dedicated.
Your intellect is
a smooth round beaten
metal mold.
A proven grail.*

*Doctor, you have your
remote little path
bricked out before you . . .
Careful small squares . . .
Bent over with fragile
ferns, strong, little . . .
curled buds of giving . . .
conceptions exquisitely
grown*

*O love, if I dance with you in
an outbreak of light, shall me
out of sun and moon and glory
trip into a foul morass?*

*Love . . . I turn here again in
the blue stream of death . . .
But still my body, ravished
with pain, will not relinquish
this weariness for you . . .*

*Yes, I have decided: I shall
lock the gate and shut myself
away from you. There shall be
no more meanderings of my
mind—no more sliding traitor-
like across a fallen fence top
rail to hunt through sweet-sounding
forest boughs for unattainable
you. I hereby resolutely
pledge myself to mightier tasks
than searching for a smile from you.
I shall firmly drive my cattle off
to coarse and crabby markets and no more
dillydangle—pause—and altogether
cease my stubby work to wonder
how you look beneath the moon!*

*I take this little red flower, love . . .
I toss it up in a rain of air.
A few feet and the flower descends.
You do not see the scarlet falling.
That is my relationship to you.
The red lies in a pleasant garden
you in your hurried walk stride
through. You do not know the
petals are there for you . . .
The flower will dry and blow.*